

**DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT
OPPORTUNITY
TOWN-OWNED PROPERTY
MAIN STREET
TOWN OF MOUNT AIRY, MARYLAND**

**Prepared
December 2019**

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION/INTEREST

Purpose

The Town of Mount Airy recognizes that commercial redevelopment has a resounding impact on the local community and is the reason for this Request for Information/Interest. Redevelopment is the replacement, rehabilitation or repurposing of an existing structure on an already developed site. This is the basis of the Smart Growth initiative in Maryland.

The Town of Mount Airy is the owner of a three story property located at the intersection of Park Avenue and Main Street in the heart of downtown. The building is an iconic architectural feature but, its current condition has made it unusable.

The Town has looked at the site and building for years and decided to try a “thinking outside the box” approach regarding its potential disposition. The Town is looking to create a Public/Private partnership. We are seeking any creative solution and/or re-purposing of the structure/site.

In consideration of a private entity meeting the requirements of a final partnership agreement, the Town would sell the property to that entity for a reasonable sum.

Downtown Mount Airy Vision Plan

The February 2019 plan listed this site proposal as the number two priority under the Short-Term Projects to be completed in the next 5 years (Page 88). The description of this action urges the Town to “*explore whether the RFP should include the donation, sale, or long-term lease of the property from the Town to the Developer as well as other conditions.*”

Background

Attached is a chronological history of what has become known as the Flat Iron building.

Attached is structural assessment of the building by Columbia Engineering Incorporated.

Attached are some of the previously considered options. Many of these options required the closing of Park Avenue.

Attached is a plat of the site.

Attached are pages 72 and 73 of the Mount Airy Downtown Vision Plan that address the site.

Status

The property is owned by the Town of Mount Airy and is currently unoccupied.

The current Zoning is DTZ (Down Town Zone).

Requirements

The Town of Mount Airy, in exchange for the Town conveying the site for a reasonable sum, would like the proposals to consider/include the following:

1. What is your vision?
2. The proposal must include a development phasing timeline for project completion.
3. Specific benchmarks will be agreed upon and contained in the final agreement.
4. A listing and commitment to capital expenditures.
5. Posting of a performance bond for capital expenditures.
6. The developer shall be responsible to provide onsite or offsite parking, storm water management, storm drainage, and all other site plan/zoning requirements in accordance with Town Code, as would be required with any other development project
7. That the use of the site be consistent with the Main Street Downtown Vision Plan.
8. Along the Main Street side of the site, that the walkability and connectivity be improved. This includes the widening of Main Street (5 feet) and a sidewalk expansion (5 feet).
9. A sidewalk along Park Avenue, connecting to Main Street must be included (5 feet).
10. That the building make effective shopping/strolling connections to adjacent buildings both on Main Street and on Veteran's Lane/Park Avenue
11. If the building is removed and rebuilt, that some element of the historic façade be included in the replacement design.
12. If the building footprint is expanded, that some element of the historic façade be included in the replacement design.
13. The current off street parking must be incorporated into the new design.
14. The developer will be responsible for any/all permits related to the demolition of all or any portion of the existing building as well as any/all permits related to the construction or rehabilitation to occur on the site.
15. The developer will carry all necessary insurance and liability coverage during any/all demolition and construction on the site and name the Town of Mount Airy on said policy.
16. Any agreement will contain a Hold Harmless clause for the Town of Mount Airy.
17. Developer must follow all State and Federal mitigation requirements for any/all materials.

Qualifications

1. A listing of the principals and partners involved with the project with bios and experience.
2. Financial statements to be provided with execution of a Confidentiality Agreement by the Town and/or its representatives.
3. Listing of previous projects, properties owned and/or developed along with references.

Considerations

1. That the use of the building/site encourage residents and tourists to visit the downtown for such uses as; a brew pub, coffee shop, restaurant or specialty store.
2. That every effort be made to limit the closing of Main Street during demolition/reconstruction.
3. That any use encouraging the arts will be considered favorably.
4. That a rebate incentive of 10 years' worth of Town real estate taxes may be possible upon completion and the issuance of a Use and Occupancy permit.
5. That a proposed use for the site may require a zoning amendment (e.g. a Bed and Breakfast facility).
6. Aesthetic improvements to the south side rock landscape facing Main Street.

Process

1. The Mayor and Town Council will issue the Request and review any/all proposals.
2. The proposals may be referred to the Mount Airy Planning Commission for input.
3. The proposals may be discussed with the Mount Airy Main Street Association for input.
4. The principals of the preferred proposal will be asked to meet with Town Staff to discuss the input/details/concerns/needs that come in response to the proposal.
5. A staff recommendation is made to the Mayor and Town Council for consideration.
6. A joint staff and partner presentation will be made at a Town Meeting.
7. The Town Attorney will prepare the necessary paperwork to memorialize the various aspects of the agreement.

Possible Grant Funds

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development offers funding for the demolition of derelict non-contributing structures, site acquisition and assembly, site development, stabilization, construction-level architectural and engineering designs. These funds are available to local governments and non-profit Community Development Organizations.

Desired Result

The desired result is to have the Flat Iron Building or some semblance of it remain as a part of the Mount Airy culture and historic downtown.

The desired result is to turn an unusable structure/site into a productive part of the economy.

The desired result is to have a successful commercial partner whose investment in the Town of Mount Airy pays significant dividends.

Possible RFI/I Recipients

Small Business Development Center (Frederick) and Carroll County Economic Development and the Frederick and Carroll Chambers of Commerce.

Insight Property Group, 4601 N Fairfax Dr. Suite 1150, Arlington, VA 22203

Listing on the Maryland DHCD Investment Opportunities webpage:
<https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Documents/OZ/Conference2019/Project.pdf>

Listing on Dodge Reports

Direct notification to potential partners.

Posting in local and regional newspapers.